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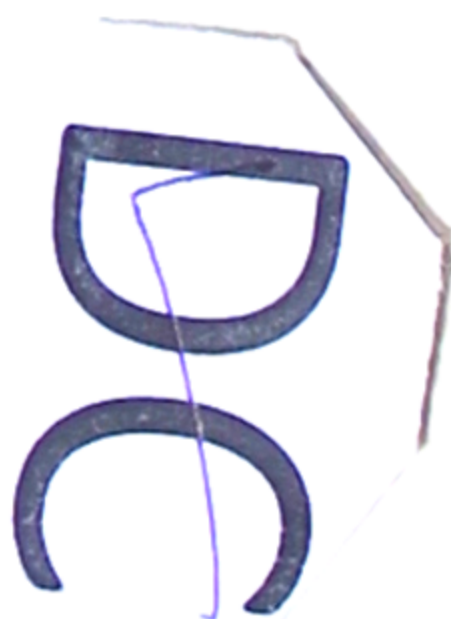
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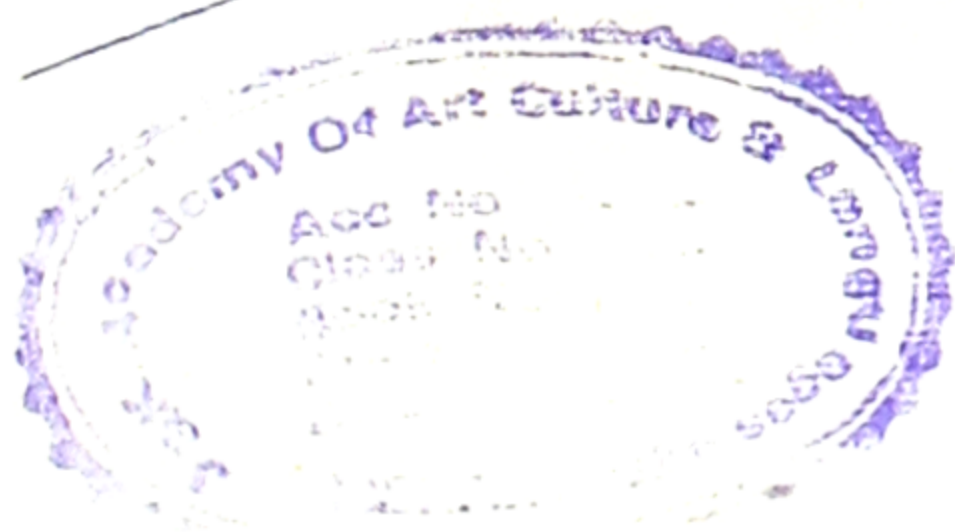
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Omar Khayyam

in his

Rubaiyat

With a true History, Life and biography of
the Persian Poet, Astronomer and
Statesman.

By

Dr. Otoman Zar-Adusht Ha'nish.

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REV. DR. OTOMAN ZAR-ADUSHT HA'NISH
Manthra-Magi of El Kharman.

Omar Khayyam

Biographical Sketch



FOREWORD

FOR more than fifty years an admirer of Omar Khayyam's Rubaiyat we have for more than twenty-five years from time to time attempted a better version of the Quatrains that the spirit of Omar might charge the mind of the student more advantageously and carry to the intellect the refreshing, elevating and inspiring rays of the heart. Irrespective of the much blighted concept of Omar's four-liners a great amount of good has been wrought and many a mind otherwise void of the warmth of spirit has gained solace and comfort during hours of sorrow which come to one and all of the advancing minds coping with superstition and ignorance running parallel with the daily walks of life.

There is no need of excusing Omar for his coarseness as revealed in Occidental versions, for the reasons, that such versions are not Omar's products. They are the result of insufficient knowledge of remote days. Omar laboured under the most strenuous conditions. He clothed the *truth* most admirably.

His wine is *thought*, his song is *word*, his woman is *deed*.

Only by study shall it be made possible for us to catch the *spirit* and with it enter through the objective world the abstract regions disclosing life and eternity.

Comparing the numerous versions in different languages with the original, we concluded the uselessness of further search in versions and at the same time discovered the great difficulty translators have to battle with, especially where the dead letter confronts intellect. Although making no special claims for our version, we nevertheless are convinced that we have got a step nearer to Omar, and with it do him justice.

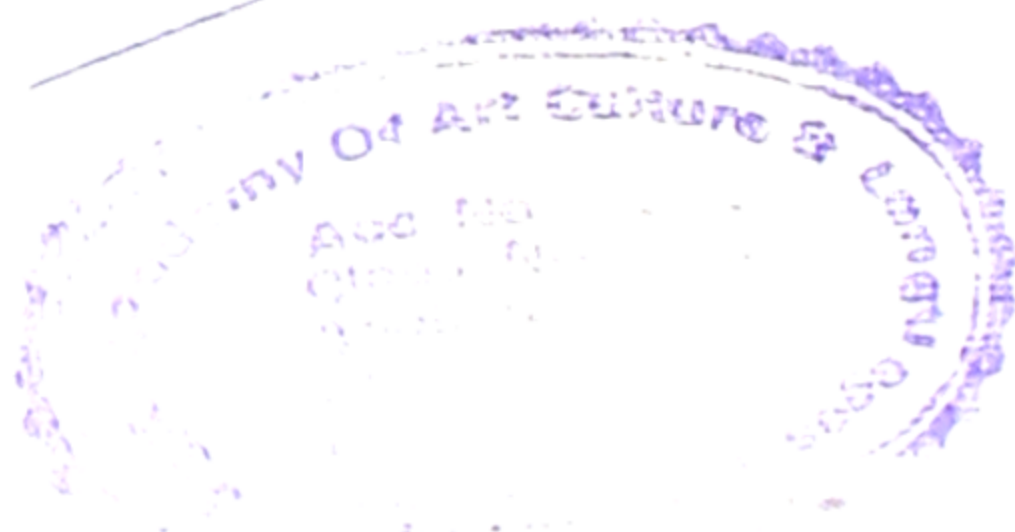
May the Introduction paged with Roman letters be a means unto a better understanding of the Quatrains following the second part of this book, paged in Arabic figures, is our wish. Should this work supply the want of mental and psychic hunger to even a small degree, we shall feel amply repaid for our twenty-five years of strenuous efforts and add one more

blossom to the glory of Omar Khayyam, whose body has slumbered beside the wall for more than eight hundred years, while his spirit now quickened, touches every heart with his magic wand of truth, and—"truth makes us free."

With untold showers of Blessings unto Perfection in all things throughout Life and Eternity.

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INTRODUCTION

THERE is hardly a fireside in civilization where the name of Omar Khayyam has not become proverbial. Every well-read member of society not only has read the quatrains of the unearthed Rubaiyat, but has quotations on his tongue at any and every opportune moment. Not only has the Rubaiyat been translated into most of the modern languages, the one- and two-syllable tongues, and the commercial languages like *Volapuk*, *Esperanto*, etc., but even the biographical sketch of Omar has been dramatized according to legendary reports and visionary or poetic interpretation.

To shorten our introduction to the study of Omar's Rubaiyat we shall confine ourselves to as brief an account as possible, leaving the mind weavings and linguistic embellishments to the appreciative reader, eager to gain another gem of poetic thought-waves to the repertoire of voiced expressions.

INTRODUCTION

In our series of reproductions of the stanzas from the Rubaiyat we attempt no issue with former translations or translators. We propose to give the spirit in so far as such can be conveyed in a modern language. In presenting these stanzas no attempt is made to improve or to reflect upon other authors, but rather to correct certain discrepancies, unavoidable in the production of literary gems, foreign to the common concept.

We have no criticism to offer for the works created by Fitzgerald, Allen, Whinfield, McCarthy and the many more translators, as their translations, flooding the bookstands, speak for themselves. We remain independent of either and all, taking them into our confidence only where the rendering of a thought-wave defies a literal translation, a difficulty all translators are prone to combat and struggle with in vain. As to the biography of Omar Khayyam we were at first tempted to remain silent, especially where the legendary part appears, weaving a network of conjectures around his private life,

INTRODUCTION

which very few of us are capable of interpreting, owing to our radical, or, democratic change in social etiquette and customs, when compared with the classical and aristocratic methods of Omar's days.

Aside from one of the many legends, popular with the novel and romantic trend of uncultured hearts and minds, we propose to confine our efforts in search of truth, keeping them free from the colourings of over-zealous and illusionary admirers. Much of the subject matter employed to embellish the character of Omar Khayyam is the product of fictitious and fanciful minds, lost in a maze of auto-delusion. Much of the literature, now current, is a fabrication of psychological contradictions, forcing with linguistic powers spurious imitations, crowding the original into oblivion.

That Omar Khayyam was born cannot be denied. As to the exact time there are many controversies. Still, it matters little as to the day, month, and even year, where the accomplishments of a character are in question, and carry weight of inestimable value to the student, ever on the alert for

INTRODUCTION

information revealing life and eternity.

In the days of Omar Khayyam the average mind paid less attention to dates ; they one and all engaged the signs of the zodiac for the determination of their daily walks of life. At the birth of a child the sooth-sayer, mullah, priest, or patriarch was consulted as to the probable *Kismet* with its many veils of density, screening paradise from our sight.

Omar Khayyam was born in the latter part of Sagittarius, supposedly December nineteenth, according to our present Calendar. The year is given as 1025 A.D., while his demise into memory is recorded at 1123 A.D.. At that rate he would be ninety-eight, an age quite illustrious when considering the many trials, sorrows, troubles, disappointments, vicissitudes, persecutions, chicanery and intrigue, subjected to in semi-barbaric days. That at least a part of his educational, literary and scientific works should have survived the vandal ages and treachery of enemies to progress of time and spirit of reason, is surely providential, and is to be credited to destiny.

INTRODUCTION

The place of Omar's birth is found in a nearby hamlet of Naishapur, the province of Khorassan, one of the richest principalities of old Iran (Persia).

Khayyam, Omar's poetical name, signifies "tent-maker." Omar retained his surname of a hereditary profession, though he himself seldom exercised that trade, considered profitable and highly honourable in his time. We hear him, however, alluding to his surname in one of his many striking, whimsical quatrains, where he eulogizes "sewing his tents of philosophy."

Omar's father, who has continued the vocation of his forefathers as a tentmaker, acquired through his unwearied efforts and industry quite an estimable fortune. He died too early to see and be proud of Omar's rare talents, and his later success in gaining a widespread illustrious fame.

His mother, Yahyam, took the greatest of care for her son's education, and all private tutors outgrown, she sent him to the then world-renowned seminary at Naishapur, presided over by the most celebrated sage, Imam Mowaffak, under

INTRODUCTION

whose personal guidance Omar was to be inoculated with all the stringent measures and acid tests of orthodoxy. And the pious Imam left no occasion slip his attention to indoctrinate Omar with the conception of Al-la, (*al*—the beginningless, *la*—the endless), as the “Only Reality and Agency” throughout life and eternity, leaving no room for the determining power of Will but unconditional submission and surrender, fostering unreserved obedience, as the only “proof of true religion.”

Naishapur was the famous seat of orthodoxy and the pride of Persia, possessing the most renowned university in Islam, in which all the current branches of science were taught by the most learned teachers—whose great proficiency in historical or empirical science, as well as in the sciences of zoology, botany, chemistry, medicine, also in mathematical, trigonometrical, physical, biological, anthropological, psychological and theological sciences, and furthermore, in the seven liberal arts of grammar, rhetoric, logic, arithmetic, music, geometry and astronomy—combined with astrology

INTRODUCTION

—was well known far beyond the boundaries of Persia, so that numerous families of all the neighbouring countries were eager to send their sons to Naishapur in order to give them the rare opportunity of gaining there the desired knowledge of any science adapted and acceptable to each and every individual student.

INTRODUCTION

OMAR'S admirable talents and keen vision awakened special attention in the venerable Imam Mowaffak, who elected him star pupil and crowned protégé, calculating upon possible successorship, thereby animating the school of learning with an unbroken perpetuity. Such an opportunity unfurled, opened to Omar access to the privacy of his instructor, and with it the family circle, which harboured the most beautiful of Iran's tulips, animated, accomplished, refined and enamoured with diademic attractiveness—Shahreen—the object of hawk-like guardianship and eagle-like watch by her father, the irreproachable Imam, whose jealousy knew no boundaries ; for like all the faithful in Islam, the highest honour to be attained on earth, and the opening wedge into paradise, was to give of the best, the most precious and beyond valuation, one's only beautiful daughter to the Sultan. Thus Shahreen was vowed to the Sultan who was to call for her at a convenient date, and when the days of her innocence should pass into the path of responsibilities.

INTRODUCTION

But "with the powers of fate no eternal trust can be made." Omar's eyes met the bewitching windows of the soul of Iran's beauty, and he became fascinated, hypnotized and psychologized with the momentum which recapitulates and visualizes the whole of the past, yea, eons of time in the twinkling of an eye—the minimization of eternity. The sign of recognition—a blush—the fluttering of hearts, and the tongue uttering kaleidoscopic sounds, while the silvery laughter reveals the happiness of enraptured souls. Like two innocent children, pinned closely by cupid's darts, they shimmeyed to the sandy stretches, here to revel in poetic fancies and in psychic ecstasy, pouring out the visions of the past and viewing illuminations of a transfigured future, yet to be revealed.

*Absorbed in verses underneath the bough,
A jug of nectar, half a loaf, and thou
Beside me, singing in the wilderness—
Ah, wilderness turns paradise enow.*

But what about the Sultan to whom she is avowed, as a nun is solemnized to the

INTRODUCTION

service of Christ? Neither Shahreen nor Omar gave thought to the illusions of mortal mind, steeped in the superstition of psychologized customs. Love knows of naught but love, which is the fulfilling of law. Visits became quite frequent, and when curtailed, means of communication were devised. Love knows no interferences; it defies obstacles, and the more difficult the path, keeping separate two loving hearts, all the greater the genius of invention while the philosophic concept shortens distances, reducing them to that *single dot* whence all lines, curves and circles receive their origin. True, frequently, there were floods of tears and wounded hearts — and

*The dewdrop cried: "How far I'm from
the sea!*

*The ocean laughed: What simpleton thou be!
We all are one — in common we are gods —
A dot alone doeth separate thee from me.*

There is but one step from the ridiculous to the sublime. With that talismanic thought-wave all menace disappears while

INTRODUCTION

the golden rays of solarized love impart a new impetus to the phenomenal on terra firma, and encompass the lovers with radium powers leading to celestial spheres.

Omar had his admirers who lay in wait for him, and guided his very footsteps while the stern and pious Mowaffak had his scouts, sneaks and siccaris, ready to strike the fatal blow. Love has its time and places; it also has its protection and favours—when free from the shadows of doubt and fear, placing implicit confidence and faith in the One immovable and impartial Intelligence, permeating and sustaining, upholding and perpetuating His Own — “for God so loved this lowly world that unto it He gave.”

No network of closely fenced vines was too delicate; no span between walls too distant for Omar to reach the idol of his heart. Many a moon waxed and waned; many dark hours of the night hovered, and gigantic shadows of midnight hours screened the twinkle of stars, while the two lovers basked in the radiations of their pulsating hearts, weaving a mental network

INTRODUCTION

unto a sunclothed day, which was to reveal greater possibilities and realizations to their fond longings ; but —

*There is a door to which I find no key ;
There is a veil through which I fail to see ;
Behind that veil they speak of thee and me ;
Ah, rend this veil in twain and where are we ?*

All the wit and humour, all the ingenuity and calculations, availed Omar nothing. With all the madness of distress he found himself powerless to break down the barriers of established customs. Weakened at the thought of the inevitable, he surrendered. The Sultan was to arrive and claim the prize allotted to him by a gullible belief that knew of no retraction but the sword. One more nightly rendezvous with his Beloved One and then —

INTRODUCTION

AT early dawn Shahreen was carried away with all the grace and pomp of a successful sultanate. While Imam Mowaffak cradled his head with eminent satisfaction and generous pride, nervously playing with the gifts bestowed on him by the manifestation of Allah—the contrite heart of Omar passed through indescribable agony and bloody sweat, crying out aloud, as his desert eyes followed longingly the long-drawn caravan of royal vesture :

*Awake ! For Khorsheed now has thrown the
stone*

*Into the Bowl, and all the stars are gone ;
While arrows reach the Sultan's turret first
And strike with greater speed his golden
throne.*

But all the lamenting, sorrowing and heart-rending cries, interspersed with silent curses, will profit him naught — Omar is *fated*. There he stands, realizing that *position, not knowledge, gives power* — and he who is void of favour must yield to designs that know no pregnability. Is the objective through life illusion ? Are we subject

INTRODUCTION

to delusion ? At the skyline he sees the white hand of one of his faithful co-students sink into oblivion, still instilling his heart with faint hopes.

*The phantom of False Dawn just now has
past,*

*True Dawn is breaking through the clouds
at last ;*

*The Saki cries : Come to the Tavern, come !
Drink wine and shun the Mosque — break
here thy fast.*

Omar suffered, and as link upon link is welded into an unbroken chain, even so he felt the agony of an endless pain. Had he eloped he would have attracted the curses of Imam Mowaffak, and the wrath of a Sultan whose army of avengers would have followed upon his heels with lightning rapidity. To submit was the only ultimatum.

INTRODUCTION

ASIDE from the blow to his tender heart his mind grew more eager after pursuit of knowledge. His unceasing thirst for higher understanding spurred him to a firm resolution of studying in private, when not engaged at Mowaffak's school. He availed himself of works of the most noted authors. Thus he was eager to draw upon the storehouse of wisdom from the most celebrated writers of the classics (called "golden"), and of the silver period of the Roman literature, as well as from the Greek, Chaldean and Egyptian astronomers and astrologers, who lived during the time from 600 B. C., to 600 A. D..

Nigh on two years had passed since Iran's Tulip was torn from his heart and carried away. Every verse he wrote betrayed in unmistakable language a tremor of the heart not easily appeased by the flutter and glitter of worldly illusions. While weaving a philosophy that promised a new aspect of things, his co-student, and later pupil, appeared from the far-off country—*a babe in his arms*. Whence, where and how were questions never to be asked. One

INTRODUCTION

glance, a single thought, and all was plain.

*The blooming rose spoke laughing once to me:
I am the Yusuf flower, come and see
My golden gems! Well, prove it then, said
I —*

*And she then turned her blood-stained robe
to me.*

Pupil and teacher never touched upon this delicate subject, except that Shahreen had been turned away from the Sultan's palace when a discovery was made that needs no further explanation. What had become of her—the idol of his heart—no one knew until twenty years later she was discovered in a brothel, a stone's throw from Omar Khayyam's spacious and palatial abode to which the Shah himself and his many pupils had liberally contributed. Although a reunion brought with it the joys of love, nevertheless, shattered hopes had played their orgies with both. Except for the daughter, now a full-grown beauty, there would have been little to hold the hearts once infatuated with love divine. The pangs of a wounded heart had furrow-

INTRODUCTION

ed deeply into the very ganglia, and a strain of sadness continued to flow through speech and pen. We can more readily understand Omar's attitude and realize the terror of interference into a state where two souls found happiness in one another.

INTRODUCTION

OMAR KHAYYAM showed especial interest in the study of the Canon of Medicine, written by Avicenna, the Arab physician and philosopher (987-1037), who united Neoplatonism with Aristotelianism. Thus Omar accumulated through his unwearied zeal a vast amount of sciences that enabled him to give to himself the best opinions from all the most famous writers in the world; like: Hippocrates of Kos, Galen Claudius (physician); Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, Socrates, Euclid of Megara, (philosophers); Plotinus, Porphyry, Iamblicus, Proclus (philosophers of Neoplatonism); Hippocrates of Chios (mathematician), Ennius Quintus (poetic art); Plautus Terence, Livius Andronicus, Accius (dramatists); Catullus (lyric); Tibullus, Propertius (elegaic); Ovid (erotic); Lucilius, Horace, Persius, Juvenalis, Petronius, Apuleius, (satirists); Cicero (orator); Atticua, Lucretius, Boetius (philosophers); Caesar Cornelius, Nepos, Sallust, Virgil, Livius Titus Patavinus, Tacitus, Suetonius, Cassiodorus (historians); Phaedrus (fabulist);

INTRODUCTION

Martialis (epigrammatist); Quintilianus, Plinius the Younger (rhetoricians); Plinius the Elder (naturalist); Augustinus (doctrine of predestination); furthermore, the Egyptian writers: Hippocrates and Ptolomaeus (astronomers and astrologers); Euclid of Alexandria (a mathematician), and many more.

INTRODUCTION

TO still better understand Omar, it is well to know that from 632 to 1258 A.D., Persia was governed by Caliphs, the successors of viceregents of Mohammed, 570—632 A.D., the founder of *Islam* (Obedience; in this case obedience to God). These Caliphs (Emirs, or Imams) were the spiritual and civil heads of the vast Mohammedan states, who founded and divided the extended Persian Empire, after Mohammed's death in A.D. 632, into the following three Caliphates (or dominions):

The Caliphate, or Emirate, in the Orient, from A.D. 632 to 1258; under Abu Bakr, the usurper, at Mecca, 632—634; under Omar I., the usurper, at Mecca, 634—644; under Othman (Osman), the usurper, at Mecca, 644—656; under Alif, the rightful Caliph, at Kufa, 656—661.

There are two great sects of the orthodox Mohammedan creed or law:

1). The sect called *Shiah* (Shi-ite, pl. the Shi-its; Shi-ism, or the doctrine held by the Shiahs, or Persian branch of the Mohammedans showing traces of the ear-

INTRODUCTION

lier Persian faith), to which belong the followers of *Ali*, the cousin and son-in-law of Mohammed, whom the *Shiahs* regard as the rightful Caliph or Imam, considering the first three Caliphs—Abu Bakr, Omar and Osman—to have been usurpers. The *Shiah* consequently reject the traditions of the other great sect, the *Sunnis*, who accept *Sunna* (tradition) and *Koran* as of equal authority, have large collections of their own, are divided into numerous sects, chiefly found in Persia and in the province of Oudh in India.

The *Shiahs*, Ali and his ten successors, believe in the Mohammedan *Messiah*, who will reign in the last days temporarily and spiritually and convert the world to *Islam* (obedience; God-directed, or directed by God). The *Shiahs* believe that the *Mahdi* has lived, and certain sects of them say that he is hiding and will reappear; but the *Sunnis* believe that he is yet to appear. Many have claimed to be the Mahdi, especially *Mohammed Ahmed* (1843—1885), who raised an insurrection in the Egyptian Sudan in 1883. According

INTRODUCTION

to Mohammedan tradition the *true Mahdi*, that is: "The God-directed," was to make his appearance in the 1300th year of Hegira, namely, 1883. (See Gordan and the Mahdi, page 25.)

The *Ismailians*, also members of a sect of the *Shiah* branch of Islam (obedience), recognized as the last of Imams, *Ismail* of the house of *Ali*. They are now represented by the *Druses*.

2). The sect called *Sinnah* is based on traditions of the prophet's words and deeds, regarded by a numerous sect as of equal importance with the Koran. Most of the Mohammedan *Sinnahs* are found among the Turks, Arabians, Afghans, North Africans and East Indians. This sect flourished under the *Omayyads* (Caliphs or Emirs) or the Arab (Mohammedan) period, at Damascus, 661—744 or 656—750; under the *Abbassids* (Caliphs or Emirs) or the *Abassid* period, at Bagdad, 763—1258 or 750—1258. Finally Bagdad fell in 1258 A.D., and the last Abassid Caliph *Mostahem*, was defeated by the *Mongols*.

Previous to the Caliphate period, in the

INTRODUCTION

glorious Sassanian period (226—641), a council of priests was convoked for the express purpose of restoring and committing to writing the ancient texts, with all their scattered fragments, and the result was the Avesta text *as we possess it today*. Omar Khayyam in reading Avestan Scriptures was divinely inspired.

Furthermore, we are to bear in mind the Caliphate, or Emirate, in *Southern Spain*, from A.D. 755—1031 under the Omayyads at Cordova, from Abdur Rahman II., 755-757, to Hesham III., in 1027—1031, including the Arab or Moorish struggle with Charlemagne. The Caliphate, or Emirate, in Egypt, from 909—1170, under the Fatimides (or Fatimites), those of the Shiah Arab dynasty, descended from the Caliph Ali and Fatima, daughter of Mohammed. The Fatimites ruled over Egypt, North Africa, Syria and Palestine from A. D. 909 to 1170.

INTRODUCTION

WITH the history of the world at his finger tips, Omar Khayyam also directed his attention to the study of all the religious systems that had existed before and also during his lifetime; he especially fixed his attention on the oldest of all religious systems — *Zoroastrianism*—of which, at his time, there existed in Persia but a small remnant of followers. He studied the Jewish ritual, Taoism, Brahmanism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Tamulism and also his own—*Islam*, the Mohammedan religion of obedience, which alone divided into seventy-two sects. In addition to it all, Omar became familiar with the Moslem philosophers and the Mystics, as well as with the skeptical effect that was produced upon his mind, which seemed to create two different habits in his so splendid character — at times running into two extremes.

The *Sufis*, or Mystics, from whom later sprang the *Dervishes*, the upholders of the *Mystics*, and the *Mullahs*, the religious dignitaries, teachers and expounders of the sacred Law—*Al Koran*—being at the same

INTRODUCTION

time the judges among the Turks, Persians and Arabs, especially those in Persia, to whom, to a certain degree, Omar himself belonged, were a sect of Mohammedan philosophic and devotional mystics, whose pietism consisted of a combination of Asceticism (taken from Buddhism and Brahminism), of Gnosticism, Nestorianism, Platonism (a kind of philosophic Monotheism), Aristotelianism, and of Zoroastrianism.

They (the Sufis) believed in Mohammedan doctrines, *i e.*, exclusively in the Koran, the sacred word, which, written in Arabic, and divided into 114 suras (chapters), professes to be the revelations to Mohammed by *Allah* (*Al*—beginningless, or origin; *lah*—the endless, or Infinite), containing the code by which the transactions of the Moslems are regulated toward *Islam*.

The *Sufis*, or Mystics chiefly *aspired for realization* attainable during their lifetime here on this terrestrial globe, which they considered as the *scul of the world*, in the hope of gaining *reunion with God*. Such longing for illumination led them to practi-

INTRODUCTION

ces of somewhat peculiar, extraordinary ceremonies under the symbols of *love*. They firmly believed that *ecstasy* alone, which they compared with intoxication, unfailingly shall lead the Mystics *beyond good and evil*, showing through divine suggestions, or applied psychology, the only and solely right road to the *true knowledge of God*, or "proof of truth."

The *Sufis*, from 700 A. D. on, belonged to the *Shiahs*, who were one of the two chief sects (Sunnis and Shiahs) of the Mohammedan doctrine, rejecting the tradition of the Sunnis. Likewise the Ismailites, another great sect of *Islam*, rejected the tradition (or *Sunna*), but they were fanatics, who had long murdered in obscurity, and were well known for their atrocities committed among the Crusaders from 1090 until 1150 A. D..

The *Sufis* believed in the doctrine of Predestination, or *Kismet*, which teaches that *Allah* has, from the day of the "*Beginningless Eternity*," called *Asal*, predestined every man's entire course of life, with his virtues as well as with his sins.

INTRODUCTION

As this dogma contradicted the goodness of the Deity, the *Kaderites*, or Cathari, from 700 A. D. on, likewise a Mohammedan sect, from which later, 1100—1300 A. D., had arisen the *Albigenses*, *Waldenses*, in France, the *Patarini* in Italy, the *Concorreganes* in Italy and the Balkhan, the *Paulicians*, at first in Greece and then, 700—900 A. D. in Armenia; besides the *Bogomiles* in 1100—1200 in Bulgaria and various other countries, were the first to *deny predestination*, asserting their doctrine of *free will* or free choice.

These *Maderites*, or Free-thinkers, later called *Mutasilites* and *Motazilites*, with whom Omar partly sympathized, spread their doctrine into other countries, gaining everywhere many followers. They believed in *Monism* (one God), whom they called *Aliph* (Alif), or the First Cause, to explain herewith the world's mystery—creation and evolution. The word “Aliph” (Alpha) stood originally for the letter “A,” being equal to the Arabic figure “1,” and was first used by the Neo-Pythagoreans and Neo-Platonists, later also by the *Motasilites*

INTRODUCTION

and by the Brethren of Purity, and in general by all Free-thinkers. Similar phraseology as that by Neo-Platonists was used by the Saviour unto the Aryan race, 33 A. D., known as Jesus the *Christ* (Chrystos—Incarnation of *New Order*), who declared: "*I am* is the Alpha and Omega, the *first* and the *last*; for what was first comes at last and the last is the first." "*I and Ab-ba are at One*" (*Ab* — beginninglessness; *ba*—endlessness); and again: "Wherefore be ye as perfect as your (concept of) *Abba* in Heaven is perfect;" "He who sees *me*—sees *Abba*."

The Arab conquerors, from the beginning of their reign, during the Omayyad Period (656—750), and during the Ab Bassid Period (A. D. 756—1258), did not tolerate any foreign religious sect in their vast dominions, wherefore they endeavoured to persecute and extirpate them. But they could not destroy the Iranian spirit. On the contrary, the whole Mohammedan pact was already imbued with Shiahism and Sunnism, and thus Zarathustrian influences resulted in a great revolution in

INTRODUCTION

the social, political and religious life of *Islam*.

As early as 960 A. D., a number of wise men convened at Bagdad, the chief seat of the Caliphs. They organized there under the name of "The Brethren of Purity" or the "True Friends," a society, with the noble object to reconcile the Greek philosophy, or the Free-thinkers, with the doctrine of *Islam*. But their most strenuous efforts remained without any desired effect. Even Avicenna, the greatest and last philosopher of Persia, whose Mysticism saw in the *Love of God* the only principle of the *Absolute Good*—the impulsive power of all actions, and who taught that:

"As man alone is aware of this love, he is called the crown of all the creation.

"Everything that proceeds from God's love has to return to God again.

"He who cherishes this love in his heart draws nearer and nearer toward God and finally identifies himself with God."

Compare with *John*: "For God is love and whosoever abideth in that love abideth in God and God in him."

INTRODUCTION

Avicenna taught that the *Sufis* in their ecstasy, which they compare with intoxication of spirits, a state beyond *good* and *evil*, attain to illumination; still all his efforts convinced only the illumined classes of people. He held that "Mohammed's paradise with its joys" represented the higher metaphysical truths, which were to be understood in a spiritual sense and form, and that, with regard to the then low degree of culture among the common Arab people, the prophet's language was induced to present in a suitable form and portray the paradisian delights with such colours as to be understood by the moron and mediocre classes, to whom scientific truth had to be given in a plain, more adaptable and acceptable manner. But in spite of all his efforts, Avicenna was not able to bring about a reconciliation between philosophy and orthodoxy. Avicenna died in 1037, at Hamadan, the ancient Ekbatana, after having previously lived for a long time in Omar's native place in Khorassan.

The persecutions of the Matazilites, however, did not cease. The *Sufis* applied

INTRODUCTION

all their means possible to drive them away from their surroundings, on account of their views contrary to those laid down in the Koran. Being without any legal protection, the Matazilites, under such oppressive conditions, deemed it necessary to try to invest their thoughts with such choice expressions as not to come in conflict with the state religion. The mystical way of expressing and explaining one's views, which permitted often two, or even three different meanings, was in those days used by many Persian poets who, in general, hid their own innermost thoughts for themselves, and disclosed them to but a few of the initiated ones. This art of disguising, which was indeed a mysterious (or mystic) makeshift between occultism and hypocrisy, called *Ketman*, played a very important role in many of Omar's quatrains. Toward the end of the eleventh century the Matazilites were so often hard pressed and so persistently persecuted that finally, under the leadership of a certain Ghazali, who was the chief advocate of the vigorous creed of the Koran—and, by the way, was

INTRODUCTION

an intimate acquaintance of Omar—they left Persia. Ghazali died 1111 A. D., and Omar devoted to him a sharp quatrain in his poem.

From now on, the *Sufis*, the representatives of the orthodox Mohammedanism, became more enraged against all the religious sects which had spread over the country. Judaism, Nestorianism, Gnosticism, Manichaeism, and even Zoroastrianism, were incessantly persecuted, while the *Sufis* among themselves, at the same time, became divided into two separate branches: the orthodox *Shiah* and the orthodox *Isma'ilism*, of whom the latter believed that the surest way in obtaining knowledge of God was to be guided by a chosen, learned and most reliable teacher; whereas the orthodox *Shiah* believed in finding the right road leading to the knowledge of God through divine suggestions, or psychology, obtained, or manifested, by ecstasy.

The manifold and diverse spiritual tendencies and their growing, pernicious excrescences, all the religious risings and sinkings owing to constant persecutions,

INTRODUCTION

all the political changes caused by wars, lasting for years—all these numerous events have exercised an unmistakable and powerful influence upon Omar's admirable character and his general profound knowledge, that when reading his poems our thoughts are driven in a mysterious way into unknown spheres, soaring a long while between heaven and earth, until we descend again to our own terra firma, where we are able to comprehend from Omar's four-liners two habits of mind, the excellent and often remarkably hidden truthful views, though carelessly scattered, and the greatest gratitude toward the Higher Intelligence, which gives most perfect satisfaction.

Endowed with such a vast extent of knowledge as Omar possessed of astronomy, astrology, mathematics, physics, Persian and Arabian poetry, philosophy, medicine, and of all the existing religious schools, and of his own doctrine of *Islam*, there was no wonder when his glorious fame became known at the palace of Sultan Melik Shah in Merv, who then gave order to his Vizier,

INTRODUCTION

Nizam-ul-Mulk, in 1074 A. D., to employ Omar at once, and with him eight other learned men, in order to reform the Persian calendar. Here opened for Omar the first opportunity to show his proficiency in all his acquired knowledge. His work soon proved a most remarkable success, for which the Sultan not only showered great favours upon him, but granted him from the treasury at Naishapur a yearly pension of 1200 mithkals of gold (240 dollars).

Omar enjoyed this noble benefit for about twenty-nine years, from 1074 until the death of his protector in 1103 A. D.. During that period Omar wrote some astronomical tables entitled *Ziji Malikshahi*, correcting the astronomical chart, and an Arabic treatise of his on algebra, translated and republished by the French; a number of text books, besides a considerable number of short poems (epigrams or quatrains; sometimes two quatrains forming a short poem), in which he pictured, with striking and vivid colours, all the important events of his time, showing especially his unwearied efforts in attacking

INTRODUCTION

mercilessly, and ridiculing blamefully and shamelessly, under the symbol of wine, love and song, the doctrine of the *Sufis*, which was defaced and disgraced by the spontaneous addition of their numerous mysteries, and not taught in its original purity. Omar has professed, *de facto*, in and with all his heart and mind, only and solely the original, pure love and obedience to that love as founded by Mohammed himself.

Omar lived a pure Sufi life, being guided by his inborn moral sense, recognizing intuitively all the moral distinctions, and by his special æsthetic sense for the beautiful in nature as well as in art. In all his studies, in all his searchings, in all his works, conversations and amusements, Omar sought for that which was genuine, noble and beautiful. This inborn faculty and great talent enabled him to discover and to foresee the outcome, effect and consequence in the social, religious and political conditions, and it is no wonder, when we see many of his quatrains severely criticizing the evils of his own time.

Under the "Platonic Life" Omar, in his

INTRODUCTION

pure heart, understood rightly the passionate attachment apart from desire, and never to be antagonistic to it by occasional or fortuitous circumstances. He held with Epicurus in his ethical doctrine: "That pleasure and happiness are the only *summum bonum*." Omar, in conformity with the further explanation, drew the satisfactory conclusion: "That true happiness in a pure soul can be only found in self-restraint, and in correct living according to the temperance, honour and dictates of conscience."

This true *summum bonum* (the supreme good) was enjoyed and practiced by Omar throughout his whole life. In after years, however, the Epicurean noble-minded, philosophical doctrine became so discredited by ill-disposed characters that the former real "supreme good"—especially in recent times—has entirely lost its precious value.

Omar loved everything that was really beautiful. He loved the beauty in "wine" as well as in "women" and in "song". Under the figure of "*wine*" Omar has illustrated

INTRODUCTION

in a vast number of his quatrains, "the free, self-dependent spiritual thinking" so characteristic within the whole *Aryan* race because of aiming incessantly at finding the very *truth*. It was he who held that it is not enough that we think, we must think what we are thinking about, and make thought our own.

Omar undoubtedly has celebrated his "wine" simply as the juice of the grape. He boasted more than he drank it, for he despised the so-called spiritual wine of the Sufis, who explained it to their adherents in such a misleading way that they finally sunk in hypocrisy and disgust.

Many of Omar's quatrains are pointing to the praise of the beauty *in* "wine," to the laud of the beauty *in* "song," and to the honour of the beauty *in* "woman," partly to awaken his sense and that of his companions for the temporary *love* in connection with the idea that all the beauty *in this span of life* is soon to pass away ; and partly to arouse the mind for the general hatred against the Mohammedan sacred doctrine, which became adulterated and falsified by

INTRODUCTION

the Sufis, having added to it many ceremonies and other mysteries of a savage nature.

Omar's greatly annoying and embarrassing unrest and disquietude lay in the sole question which rang repeatedly in his ears, again and again, through all his life, namely:

"What are human beings upon this earth for, when they must leave it again? They make an effort to develop their minds; they are learning and working hard; some with a satisfying success, others attended by failures, misfortune, oppressed by sickness, sorrow, trials, tribulations, heartaches, fear of poverty, and many sorts of disadvantages; others again are endowed with strong health, bodily and mentally, with an abundance of food, being successful in all their undertakings, *only for that one reason, that the Kismet* (the wheel of heaven, or the celestial body with its stars) has forever decreed for every creature in this world, whether just or unjust, his own certain destiny," for which Omar makes God himself responsible.

At the same time Omar accuses the theologians, philosophers, doctors and

INTRODUCTION

other learned men, ridiculing all their vain efforts, for not having found the right key to open the mystic door to real knowledge of the *One Almighty, Absolute God*.

As Omar believed in *Monism*, he at first highly esteemed the former *Motasilites*, as well as the *Brethren of Purity*, because their faith was not invested with the cloak of Sufistic Mysticism. Omar himself was with heart and mind a pure Sufi; he professed frankly and openly that the great mystery may be solved by the faith in *Monism*, which alone shall explain how death and transitoriness (perishableness), or, in general, how the imperfect and the evil *can come into harmony* with an almighty and kind God. Even as in a single atom there are contained all the elements creating worlds, even so one Divine Atom—*God*—contains the *summa summaris* of all wisdom, understanding and knowledge.

He declares, further, that the knowledge of God cannot be acquired *by means* of meditation and speculation, as the

INTRODUCTION

Theologians, who pretend to have found the right way unto attainment through disputations and arguments; *nor by* demonstrating their arguments of understanding according to the laws of logic, as philosophers and wise men do; *nor by* choosing a reliable leader by whose arguments he pretends to carry them upon the right road, and thus lead them to the knowledge of God, as the Ismailities would prefer it; *but only and solely by* means of love created by ecstasy (which is likened unto intoxication), and as the Sufis or Mystics rightly assert, grants to those who really love God the divine suggestions of faith, confidence, assurance, inducing them to purify their hearts and characters, to free their rational souls from all impurities, and lead them thus on the never-failing road to the true cognizance of God—*“Proof of Truth.”*

This assertion was Omar's final, settled conviction, after all of his own efforts had failed to lift the veil of God's mysteries, and after he had tested a circle of friends who deserted him, one after another, thus

INTRODUCTION

having found none to whom he could impart his jewels for future generations, as the present time, he said, was not ripe enough for right understanding of his costly pearls.

Omar was thus obliged to submit to the inevitable, seeking consolation in the only hope to seize the opportunity of reconciling his views with those of the Sufis.

On account of His former attacks and unsparing derisions of the then mystified Mohammedan doctrine, in consequence of which Omar was greatly hated and even persecuted by the Sufis themselves, he at last, in fear of his life, deemed it advisable for him to make a pilgrimage to *Mecca*, in order to prove his seeming, but not his real orthodoxy.

On his return to his native place, Naishapur, he made a practice of attending the morning and evening prayers to disguise therewith his private opinions, although they had been no secret to those of his best associates. For a time he was seen with a jug in hand, visiting deserted

INTRODUCTION

places ; this he did to insure safety, as the old belief had it that the obsessed, the insane and drunkards cannot be made responsible for their utterances.

INTRODUCTION

IN conclusion, we should devote a few words with which to explain the metre in which Omar has written his quatrains.

Omar Khayyam's *Rubaiyat* (singular *Rubai*; plural *Rubaiyat*) consists of several hundreds of independent stanzas (strophes or quatrains), each of which contains four lines (verses); the first, second and fourth lines are rhyming, the third line (or verse) is a blank (an unrhymed line).

As each verse (or line) of the quatrain consists of five *iambic* feet, or measures (iambus foot), it is called also a "pentametre," from the Greek word "penta." meaning "five," and "metron," signifying "measure" or "foot."

rhyming	:	—	:	—	:	—	:	—	:	—	:
rhyming	:	—	:	—	:	—	:	—	:	—	:
blank	:	—	:	—	:	—	:	—	:	—	:
rhyming	:	—	:	—	:	—	:	—	:	—	:

Each *Rubai*, or quatrain (stanza, strophe), is a short poem of itself; it forms generally a concluded whole. In but some instances, two quatrains form a concluded idea. Here and there are quatrains that repeat themselves, not literally, but appear-

INTRODUCTION

ing in a vesture of various words expressing the same meaning, or nearly the same idea.

Most of the quatrains are devoted to transitoriness ; one greater portion to the Mohammedan doctrine ; one lesser portion to the world's mystery, and one portion to the free thinking demonstrated under the figure of "wine."

It must be remembered that in the reading of Oriental poetry great allowances have to be made. It was customary in days gone by for the writer to accentuate the first letter of a word with *a period above* the letter, or below. *A period* stood for the spiritual sense if *above* ; for the terrestrial sense if *below*. The *dash above* called for reading between the lines, making allowances for double or treble meaning ; while the *dash below* indicated the word or sentence to be symbolically interpreted. Scribes or copyists, in their negligence, left out these most important notations, consequently inviting much confusion. Applying this rule to all Oriental writings, scriptures particularly, we readily see room for un-

INTRODUCTION

certainty and doubt.

It is an old-time Oriental custom for pupils to envelope their illustrious sage in as much transcendentalism as language will permit. It is human nature not only to laud those we respect but to surround their very being, or daily walks of life, in occult, celestial terminology, often bordering on the miraculous. To make a biography interesting, there also have to be certain vows attached, showing exceptional fidelity leading to an agreement of friendship; also, admirers have to be found who lavish their fortunes for educational and other purposes. Thus Omar is said to have entered a pact with two other fellow-students that whosoever might be favoured by Providence in gaining an influential position should be duty-bound to assist the other two in gaining access to the source of wealth. One of them, Nisam-ul-Mulk by name, gained renowned statesmanship; the other Hassan Sabah, turned a notorious character, a menace to the country, a leader of fanatical hordes, who used every known means to subject people

INTRODUCTION

en masse. There are also reports reducing Omar to the lowest round of poverty, a theme readily fostered to win the lower element for a following and inspire their admiration. Thus all the great men who have come from the lower walks of life add to poetic calculations and substantiate the claim that "in the lowest I am mighty," while the mighty are raised to do God's will, and such a one we discover in Abu Tahir, who is said to have made Omar his protégé upon whom fortunes were bestowed.

INTRODUCTION

MANY miracles are attributed to Omar, be it as to healing or phenomena. As an astronomer and astrologer Omar enjoyed world-wide fame, and kings as well as learned men sought his counsel upon all matters of importance—political as well as otherwise. Omar was consulted on matters of weather conditions, and all beliefs calculated to contradict his predictions did not confuse him in the least; as in the case of Sultan Muhammed, who arranged a hunting party during the winter season. An approaching storm was about to delay the hunt, but Omar assured the Sultan of exceptionally beautiful weather, which proved true.

As to his death, giving the date and naming the place where his body was to lie under the heavy mat of flowers, falling from fruit trees twice a year, his prophecy has come true. Nasama-i-Arudi reports the incident as follows:

“In the year 506 (1112-1113 A. D.) Imam Omar Khayyam and another renowned sage came to Balkh, stopped in the Slave-dealers’ street, entering the house of

INTRODUCTION

Emir Abu Sahad, where I joined the party. In this friendly communion, listening to Omar's 'Proof of Truth,' I heard him say: 'My grave will be at a place where trees shall cast their bloom twice a year.' To me this seemed at first improbable although I knew that a man like him would not utter idle words. When in the year 530 (1135-1136) I came to Naishapur, several years had passed since that great man buried his countenance in dust, and this lowly world was robbed of him. I sought on the eve of a Friday his grave—and took with me a guide to point out the grave for me. This guide brought me to the Cemetery Hira, where, turning to the left, I found the grave. It was close against the wall, and over it spread branches of blooming pear and peach trees. Upon his grave had fallen so many blossoms that the dust remained covered under their weight. I remembered then the words he spoke while at Balkh—and began to cry, for in all the habitable places of terra firma I have not seen any one his equal. Although I was witness to this prophecy, I never noticed that Omar

INTRODUCTION

attached any faith to astrological divinations, and I never heard other great men say they had any such faith."

Omar's greatest enemies not only had to admit his superior knowledge but consulted him as a physician in fatal troubles and sought his counsel upon intricate and perplexing technicalities. It is to be lamented that the greater part of his scientific and philosophic works should have been destroyed. Like all men of real greatness, Omar had to suffer much and see the moron and mediocre type with their group leaders gain victory, bearing out the old adage that "with ignorance even Gods struggle in vain." Nevertheless, the greatness of a man lies in his simplicity and his charity "to forgive and to forget."

While favourities at court and in "high places" praise, laud and deify their masters, Omar had no hymn for kings and potentates. He lived for the "Proof of the Truth." His refinement of heart, his voluminous operations of the mind, naturally sought equals, or, at least, company capable to appreciate his wisdom, and profit by it. But

INTRODUCTION

alas, even here Omar, had to experience that "with the powers of fate no eternal trust can be made." Expectations breed disappointments. Omar concluded that "Better than social relation is silent isolation." He had around him friends, such as they were, only to make bitter experiences. The more friendly and confiding he showed himself to be, the greater their enmity, jealousy and final disastrous chicanery. Even Omar had to learn the old adage: "Familiarity breeds contempt." Such sad experiences led Omar to the following:

*Seek company of only righteous men ;
Don't meddle with the fools of sickly brain.
If righteous men give poison—you may
drink !*

An antidote from fools pour out ! It's pain !

Any and every effort to find his equal proved futile, and herein lies the sad part of every great heart anxious to impart the secret of happiness to the struggling ones, whose mediocre intellect is fain to grasp the golden nuggets of eternity and to exercise wisdom which alone can free us

INTRODUCTION

from the entangling nets of ignorance and superstition. Even as a Saviour was left alone in Gethsemane and alone in the garden of Arimathea, just so Omar had to find himself bereft of all his proteges—maligned, betrayed. In three stanzas he immortalizes his disillusion and with it voices the experiences of all humble but great and noble mental giants :

*For many, many years I ever sought
For friendship of a brother of my thought,
Who would not suddenly end our friendship's
cord,*

*Nor break his word, nor turn from me at
nought.*

*But of how many friends to learn I had
That anything but brethren I have met—
And oh, how oft at random I replaced
Such brethren with another hopeless set.*

*At last, when year on year had rolled away,
Some said : Your wish became your en'my's
prey.*

*Al-lah ! As long as Thou wilt let me live,
I'll seek no more for friendship in man's lay.*

Voluminous betrayals by his inmost

INTRODUCTION

friends, or pupils, compelled Omar to take refuge in a pilgrimage to Mecca in "Proof of Truth," and the only undeniable testimony of his fidelity to *Islam*, annulling all further persecution; for once a *hadji*, a holy man—always a faithful worshiper. True, it gave his contemporaries food for discussion. The questions arose: "Did Omar lead his steps to Mecca to prove his orthodoxy, or was it a contrite heart leading to devotion?"

In literary pursuits Omar spent many years between Balkh, Merv and Naishapur. While studying and supplementing Avicenna's "Book of Healing," Omar one day placed a mark at a chapter defining "Monism and Polyism," recited a customary prayer and arranged for the last rites. He neither ate nor drank, and that memorable night he bowed his head to the ground most reverently and prayed:

*If I have pried into Thy mystery
It was to fathom Thee—Eternity;
But if I did against Thy will—let be
Thine mercy greater than my sins to Thee.*

INTRODUCTION

Shortly thereafter his entity departed into oblivion whence there is no return except by memory and the higher concept of the mind, able to control the ethereal waves, minimizing the refractive and reflective laws to a single point of polarity, recognizing within the magic mirror of infinitude the focalizing point of the One who is the revealing countenance unto all.

Ever since the days of Omar many speculations have been attached to his works and many more interpretations offered to his quatrains, still all fall short in their conjectures, too faint to fathom the depth underlying every word and sentence.

In the Rubaiyat, or Four-liners, we realize Omar's *Vassayat*, the last will, a testament, adding to the world's literature a treasure of inestimable value to a seeker after "Proof of Truth," strengthening and animating a faith that allows no underestimation. As an *Aryan* Omar kept alive the spirit of enlightenment. The still gestating and undefined operations of *Islam* could not curtail his faith in a tie that binds the infinite to the finite.

INTRODUCTION

The philosophy of the Greek scholars given in Neoplatonic terms by the great Saviour still inspired great minds, though surrounded by ill-devised orthodoxy. Islamic culture continued to further Greek and Persian culture. Wherever menaced, writers and poets restored to four-liners to express their hidden meaning and testify before the studious that the "Proof of Truth" will override all pretence and claim of governing superstitions. Avicenna himself wrote in four-liners, and followers of Omar did likewise ; for this reason there is a possibility that some of the quatrains are interpolations which to separate will prove as much an impossibility as the interpolations in the Scriptures—art and embellishments having become inseparable. And again, what does it matter so long as we catch the spirit and leave the letter to illiterates to argue about ? With Omar we must hold :

*Waste not thy life in letters of dispute ;
Discuss not truth, it proves but vain pursuit ;
Nor argue or debate about men's creeds ;*

INTRODUCTION

*It makes friends enemies ; turns man to
brute.*

This quatrain alone reveals the regime of a true thinker and a thinker who knows what he is thinking about. Omar proposes to point out the thousands of nature's gifts to man and collect all the colourings and shades into a costly rug, offering usefulness in art. Omar holds to the Word of God as discovered in nature, where the thousands of blooming flowers propose to prove beauty and oneness in complexity, against which perplexity is but a cipher.

His philosophy and religion is *monistic* ; his science and economics, *panistic*—or, *royal* in principle ; *democratic* in application. The soul of the universe is the *One* ; the envelopments, *complex*. However transcendental in his speculations of life and eternity, his reasonings always bring him back to the starting point once set ; for this reason he can say :

*For knowledge longing, Oneness questioned
me ;*

“Commence to spell the alphabet to me.”

INTRODUCTION

*And I began, "Alif"—: "Enuf; no more,"
The Oneness said: "Who knows Alif knows
me!"*

Omar's whole effort is directed towards self-reliance, self respect, self-illumination; free and independent thinking. *Wine* to him represents that stir in philosophy, or stick in intoxicants, ordinarily forbidden but sought after all who thirst for knowledge. With *jug* in hand, representing *measure*, Omar wanders to nearby ruins, here to commune in secret, and communicate to others the treasures of old philosophers.

Woman represents the gestative love, the ecstatic state whereof in marital embrace is to symbolize the fulfillment of all the laws, and that *love* knows *no fear*. Such *love*, born of the woman principle, is to lead to the birth of the Saviour Liberty, crucifying all the superstitions of undeveloped states, leading into emancipation—freedom of thought and self-control, where the platonic love reaches poetogamy and with it the "Love for God"—"For *God* is *love* and whosoever abideth *in that love* abideth *in*

INTRODUCTION

God and God in him."— (John.)

Among the many tracts written by Omar there is one which in all brevity summarizes all the different directions of Persian and Greek philosophies, and concludes that seekers after the "Proof of Truth" and realization of God are to be placed into four principal groups :

First : there are the *Theologians*, or vitalists, who psychologize their mind with disputes based upon phenomenal proofs, quieting the anxious heart, and to a degree satisfy their yearning after realization of God.

Second : there are the *Philosophers*, or the wise, who attempt realization through arguments based on reason, according to laws in logic, and in no wise are satisfied with quieting arguments. Unable to depend upon the laws of logic alone, their goal is doubtful.

Third : there are the *Ismailites*, who claim that the path unto realization cannot be found, unless guided by a dependable teacher, because arguments appertaining to the realization of the Creator and His

INTRODUCTION

existence and His attributes meet obstacles and contradictions, baffling all reason, making advancement uncertain.

Fourth : there are the *Sufis* (Transcendentalists and Mystics), who do not seek realization by scheming and by speculation, but through purification of their inner being and control of character, and thus free their conscience from all interruptions and impositions that cling to the physical body. The substance thus refined by denials approaches the splendor of God, without doubt, and enjoys the revelations of infinitude with all its possessions. This latter path is the better of the four, since the highest knows no want of perfection throughout eternity, and is free from barriers and veils. But whatever exists below is withheld from man, owing to his debasement. But when the veils are rent in twain and all self-imposed barriers are broken, then the true nature of things, as they are in reality, shall become known. The prophet—to him be glory—has pointed out with his words: “Verily, in the days of your existence shall be revealed intuitions;

INTRODUCTION

will you not follow them ?”

*“All thinkers tell: love’s potent relation
In ecstasy lies—not speculation.”*



Rubaiyat

of

Omar Khayyam



Rubaiyat

Awake! For Korshed now has thrown the
Stone
Into the Bowl, and all the Stars are gone;
While arrows reach the Sultan's turret first,
And strike with greater speed his golden throne.

* * *

Now that the phantom of False Dawn has
passed,
True Dawn is breaking thru the clouds at
last;
The Saki cries: Come to the tavern, come!
Drink Wine, and shun the Mosque—break
here your fast!

* * *

New Year has come! For Jesus' Breath
revives
The weakened hearts, gives trees, plants, herbs
their lives;
While Blooms, like Moses' hands, on every
bough
Spring forth, and all the world with vigour
thrives.

As Roses turn to dust on "windy day"—
 For you well know, they bloomed here yesterday—
 So fast will disappear our Jams and Kais.
 When "Stormy Time" shall take their lives
 away.

* * *

Come! Join your Old Khayyam and leave the
 lot
 Of Kaikobad and Kaikhosru forgot!
 Let Zal and Rustum with greater anger fume;
 Let Hatim cry: "To supper!"—mind them not!

* * *

Iram, the "Splendid Rosary", is gone,
 And Jamshyd's "Cup with Seven Rings",
 forlorn,
 From which he read all hidden things. But
 still
 The Ruby grows, where'er its seed was blown.

* * *

And likewise gone is David's precious voice.
 But when the rain from plants the dust
 destroys,
 Then Nightingale's Pehlevi-Voice cries loud
 To pallid Rose: "Drink Wine, turn red,
 rejoice!"

And likewise when the Cock begins to crow,
The Saki cries: Arise, don't miss the glow
Of Wine! Remember, 'tis the Hour of
Prayer,
And silently obey the Sacred Law!

* * *

What's Balkh or Bagdad, when my life is
o'er?
What's sweet or bitter, when the cup runs
o'er?
Come, drink! For oft will pass this very
moon,
When we shall turn to dust and be no more.

* * *

Repent—be cleansed and free—the Law
obey!
The Fire of Spring may be your judgement
day!
But when the Bulbul sees the Roses smile,
She sings to me: "Drink Wine, be free and
gay!"

* * *

The dawn is breaking through, the night is rent.
All weary plants, refreshed, revived, dewbent,
Express their joy and bliss by giving thanks
To Him who blesses every faithful hand.

At dawn, which tears aside the veil of night,
 I rise, and drink my Morning-Cup in sight
 Of Him Who keeps the Secret's Key, and ask
 To grant me graciously His pray'rful Light.

* * *

As Wine a healing balm is for all pain,
 That drives away of sorrows ev'ry stain,
 Some drops poured on the earth from Ruby
 Cup
 Will quench some burning eye along this lane.

* * *

And as the Tulip takes her morning sup
 From Heaven's Vineyard, then with thanks
 looks up,
 Just so shall we lift up our eyes to God's
 Abode, till Night inverts our empty Cup.

* * *

Life's caravan flies hastily away,
 Be therefore gay and happy day by day;
 Life without joy would mean eternal loss;
 So fill my Cup, ere night shall steal away.

When passing by the tavern yesterday,
I met a drunken friend, who on his way
For home a vessel bore, and bade me taste
Of it. I drank—'twas Grape from Beauty's
Clay.

* * *

Like glowing sparks men, one by one, appear,
They live, love, hate—some even gain good
cheer—

A Cup of Life they drink, then into dust
They sink, and like a flash hence disappear.

* * *

The golden Lights within world's ether
bright,

That moved before, still move, reflecting light;
While in this World we for a time appear
To disappear at morning with the night.

* * *

Let me have but a lonely spot, where I
Could spend the lovely time of Spring—and
lie

On grass in joy with wine and with a belle—
And I would then all Sultan's pomp defy.

With book in hand, reclining 'neath a bough,
 A jug of wine, a half a loaf and thou
 Beside me, singing songs of love divine,
 Turns deserts into paradise enow.

* * *

A budding rose spoke laughingly to me:
 "I am the Yusuf-flower; come and see
 My golden gems!" And ere I said, "Give
 proof,"
 She turned her blood-stained bloom for me
 to see.

* * *

Take wine—do not succumb to mortal pain;
 Misers alone hide their ill-got gain.
 Don't chain ill health; you're not a lump of
 gold
 To hope, when dead, to be dug up again.

* * *

Your hope is nothing else but vanity,
 Your weal and woe are but inconstancy;
 Think! As the snow-deck'd ground melts in
 one night,
 E'en so fades hope into eternity.

Where once the Jamshyds loved to troll the
bowl,
Now stags, as well as lions, like to stroll,
And Bahram, who wild asses snared, was
snared
Himself—and paid with death his final toll.

* * *

Where'er you see a rose or tulip—red—
Be sure that here some Sultan's blood was
shed,
But where you see a harmless lily—white—
Be sure, it was a damsel's handsome head.

* * *

The light-green turf that grows near-by the
stream
Sprang up from lily's lips, just like a dream ;
Beware then, lest your feet might trample on
The dust, where cheeks shone like a sunny
beam.

* * *

Come, Saki, fill the cup with once shed tears.
Think not today, nor of the future fears !
Tomorrow, when we die, we'll meet some
friends
Who 've gone before, these seven thousand
years.

Some strove for happiness, for joy and weal,
Rejoiced in ruby-wine at every meal;
But now they're gone, their fate was death,
 their rest
A place on which the gravestone is the seal.

* * *

Pass thru the world with happiness, and may
Your peace be found in ruby ev'ry day!
This green, that others left, is now our
 sward,
But who will sit upon *our* dusty clay?

* * *

My life is short, it lasts one day or two;
It passes like the fleeting wind—how true!
For that I take no heed of those two days;
The day that's past, or that's tomorrow due.

* * *

Once was this pitcher here quite hotly chased
By some sweetheart with curly head, sweet-
 faced;
The handle of the pitcher's side was once
An arm that clung around the lover's waist.

As fall the tears from Heaven's clouded face,
So fall the drops from Vine, my mind to
brace ;

As now sweet flowers give delight to me,
So shall my dust some fairy's bosom grace.

* * *

This world seems like a caravansary,
A pilgrim's home, or vale of misery ;
A feast, a joy for Jamshyds and their clique—
A tomb, a rest for Bahrams, you and me.

* * *

I stopped at some bazaar, one dusky day,
And watched a Potter, fiercely kneading clay,
And lo! the Clay cried: "Pray, treat kindly
me,
For I was yesterday, what you're today."

* * *

Do not forget "Old Story's" Truth, I pray:
A Drink, if from your hand, tastes sweet,
they say,
But bitter, from a pitcher of wet clay,
Of which was Man once made in such a way.

Be drunk with Wine, Khayyam, and highly
 glad,
 Caress with loveliness your Tulip's head,
 Be happy now, don't care what yesterday
 You were—your blood tomorrow may be
 shed!

* * *

The Fast of Ramazan had sneaked away,
 To Potter's workshop I thus went straight-
 way,
 And was amazed to see myself among
 The thousands of the diverse shapes of clay.

* * *

The Potter worked the clay with much dis-
 play
 Into a pot that looked quite bright and gay;
 The lid—he formed of sundry monarchs'
 skulls,
 The haft—of beggars' feet, once gone astray.

* * *

At Potter's house one of the Cups has said:
 "My shape, be sure, of common Earth was
 made;
 When broke again, some bricks they'll form,
 to place
 Them on the grave, or by some rosy-bed."

Quite many vessels of the baser clay
That stood awry in Potter's shop, would say :
"Are we to blame ? Did not the Master make
Our forms ? Why ! Did His Hands then
shake ? "

* * *

Could you believe—the Potter who did make
The Cups, would all of them as worthless
break ?

Those lovely faces, limbs and charming
forms ?—

What *Love* once made, should *Wrath* then
break ?

* * *

Last night again some hasty vessels said :
"At Judgement Day great searching will be
made,
And strange and curious questions boldly
asked :

'Where's Seller-Buyer-Potter and his
Trade ? ' "

* * *

"Be well prepared ! The Trump will sound
its knell,
And Angry Judge condemn thee into Hell ;
But as All-Goodness can be never bad,
So tremble not—be calm— 'twill yet be well. "

Another vessel raised his voice and said :
 "When my Destroying Angel comes to tread
 Me down, make of my dust a cup, fill it
 With Wine, which shall revive me, tho I'm
 dead."

* * *

Here ends the Vessel's Talk. Thus passed
 The Month of Fast. With joy Shawwal at
 last
 Appears ; young Moon looks in ; she hears the
 cry
 Of porters : "Bottles on your back ! Work
 fast !"

* * *

Thy body is the Tent ; thy inward soul
 The Sultan Self, who on this rolling bowl
 Is much revered. But when the Ferrash
 comes
 And strikes him hard, he's gone, and that
 is all.

* * *

When earthly life is gone with all its fame,
 While ego enters there, wherefrom it came,
 This earth will still revolve, and never
 change,
 For when we're gone, this world remains the
 same.

Of all departed who did e'er return
To teach us hidden things that we may learn ?
Be sure, your prayers are naught—your hum-
ble heart
Creates your Bliss, for which your Soul doth
yearn.

* * *

Alas ! The joyful Spring did disappear !
Look here ! How torn the blossoms are, and
drear !
And, oh ! thou Bird of Youth, how long shalt
thou
Keep waiting me thy lovely song to hear ?

* * *

On ruined palace tow'ring once to sky,
Where kings bowed down in sacred pray'r
with sigh—
A pigeon now in doleful calls there cries :
"Coo-coo ; coo-coo ; where-whence ; when-
how ; why die ? "

* * *

Wherefore to grieve about my present lot ?
I care not whether I do well or not,
For I don't know, if I tomorrow shall—
The Breath just breathing out—breathe in,
or not.

Among the Ashes of some past I heard
A feeble sound, held down by mud and dirt;
The stirring of the ground revived the tone,
It touched my ear, and I could hear "the
word."

* * *

Miss not the tide, when rosy cheeks do wave
To you! Show all the sympathy you have!
Feel happy then, for time is near, when all
Shall pay their tribute to the earthen grave!

* * *

Tho fast asleep, a Voice to me once cried:
"The Flow'r will open eyes tomorrow wide."
When wide-awake a whisper reached my ear:
"The Flow'r that fully bloomed, this morning
died."

* * *

Where shall I go to find the only One?
His Breath in mine can let me ne'er alone.
When joy or grief surround my soul and
heart,
I sigh for Thee, and sob to reach Thy Throne.

The World will still revolve as long before,
When all the burdens of our Life, we bore,
Have by the wheel of Time been rolled away;
The world will still remain—but we—no
more.

* * *

Be wise, Oh Potter, gently treat thy clay,
I see Firdusi's finger on its way,
And Khosru's hand just coming on your
wheel,
Do not degrade man's figure! please, obey!

* * *

Upon the walls of Tus a bird there sat,
His feet on Kawus' skull—his face quite
sad—
At once he sighed and moaned: "Alas! poor
King!
Thy beating gongs and drums fore'er are
dead."

* * *

Give not thyself to sorrow, grief and pain,
Leave off thy pray'rs and fasts, they're all
in vain!
Take thy delight in Wine and rosy lips,
And don't return to misery again!

In this Gethsemane of strangled Thought
 I spent my Life in sweating out my blood.
 My heart feels crushed just like a fallen bud,
 And like a tulip red steeped in her blood.

* * *

Why teach and preach of fasting and of
 prayer?
 Pass by the mosque, make haste, do not de-
 spair,
 Come to the tavern quick, to fill your Cup,
 Then think—you're naught. Let vines your
 burden bear.

* * *

The Ruby Liquid that with laughter grows,
 As from the bottle's neck it richly flows,—
 Is, to be sure, a Sweetheart's blood, that with
 Her crystal tears is trimmed in her enclose.

* * *

True lovers—whether ugly, whether fair;
 Their pillows brick, or bolstered soft with
 hair;
 Their daily dress be velvet or but rag;—
 For Hell or Paradise will never care.

Come here, my dearest love, the dawn is nigh,
Sing magic songs, dispel my doubts, and vie
With me to drink the charming juice of grape,
Ere angel Death appears to teach us fly.

* * *

In this World's Garden I have spent my life
With pain and travail. Though much good
was rife,
My heart closed like a Rosebud, and like
A Tulip drenched with blood—remained in
strife.

* * *

The magic wheel of Time turns out our woes.
What little good it brings is mixed with
blows.
If this the unborn knew, they would not come
To live on bitter pills, a daily dose.

* * *

Of all our strife—the gain, where is it then?
Of all our toil—the good, where is it then?
In Fate's great furnace burns much good and
just,
But where's the smell of smoke? Where is it
then?

Suppose thy Life met all its wants—what
then?

And thy Life's book were read quite thru—
what then?

Suppose you lived a hundred years in happi-
ness,

And would perhaps much longer live—what
then?

* * *

And if you lived three hundred years, be sure,
You'll have to go; there is no other tour.
At final day, it will be all the same—
Have you once been a king, or beggar poor.

* * *

Where from the earth red tulips subtly pout,
There some King's blood has flown, without
doubt;

But where a vi'let peeps above the ground,
There once blue eyes did beckon the devout.

* * *

Of all that trod before this toilsome way,
Not one has told us, to the present day,
The hidden things. Do but what should be
done,

For once you turn to sod—you there will stay.

With ruby lips and Wine upon the lawn,
Near by the stream I sat, to be my own;
When shell-pearls sent their brilliant light,
and, Oh!
The Cock began to crow—he thot 'twas dawn.

* * *

Some men are sighing for the Kausar stream,
That prophets teach, and of sweet Houris
dream.
We rather take the Cash, and let the Credit
go
To future joys of those who cross the stream.

* * *

The heav'nly wheel, Oh Love, had *that*
design:
“To take away my Life as well as thine.”
Come, sit by me upon this grass, for soon
Fresh grass will spring upon thy dust and
mine.

* * *

Khayyam! The Heaven closed the door for
all
Debates, yet know that the Eternal Bowl,
Which Alif holds for thousands of Khayyam,
Pours precious Wine into our earthen bowl.

'Tho Moon or Wine through all creation's
veins—

Or Mah and Mahi, too, with all their grains—
May flow and grow and change—yet all must
die,

But Master Breath, the real Life, remains.

* * *

Thy Magic Face Thou showest now to none,
And then again Thout art in flesh and bone
At once transformed. Of Thy created show,
Thou art Thyself the Sport and Looker-on.

* * *

One Breath Divine divides Faith from Un-
faith,

Belief is cut from doubt by conscious Breath.
Be of good cheer, then, while you draw your
Breath,

Since Breath alone divides your Life from
Death.

* * *

Some preach "Salvation" after God's Design,
Others teach "Truth," or about "Sins" do
whine!

In either case I drink my wine, and love
My Love with curling ringlets soft and fine

Waste not thy life in letters of dispute,
Discussions upon Truth is vain pursuit,
While arguments, debates about the creeds
Make enemies who often turn to brute.

* * *

From doubt to clear assurance take a breath!
Yes, Alif's Breath, the guiding thread to
Faith!
Enjoy this precious breath, while you are
here,
'Tis all there is in Life, thereafter—Death.

* * *

I am about to fill my Cup with Wine;
With two or three full Cups I will design
To be divorced from ancient Truth, and then
To take to wife the daughter of the Vine.

* * *

Join Old Khayyam, and leave it to the Wise
Who talk of Hell and Hopes of Paradise!
Life flies—that's certain, all the rest is—
Lies;
The flow'r that once has blown, forever
dies.

The mighty Sultan Mahmud, making war
 On India's poor and scanty hordes, did pour
 His glorious army. Defeated, conquered,
 They were compelled to thus profess his
 Lore.

* * *

Drink Wine, and banish all anxiety;
 Shun all the creeds and from beliefs do flee!
 God's wondrous alchemy cures every need,
 And thus destroys all pious trickery.

* * *

Koran does claim, there's wine in Paradise,
 And pretty maids for him who saintly dies;
 Permit me Love and Wine, while here below,
 The future Bliss grant all Thy saintly
 Wise.

* * *

Below this cloudy vault the Weary moan,
 And Jihun drives their tears to depths unknown;
 Why! *Hell* is nothing but our grief that
 burns,
 And *Heaven* all our good that we have
 sown.

At first God's Pen wrote plainly what shall be,
The good and bad for you as well as me.
So all the pray'rs and tears will not a dot
Blot out of what He wrote in His Decree.

* * *

When first the sunny steeds were saddled,
and
Parwin and Mushtari took up their stand,
That day our course was fixed. Can we be
blamed,
Since Fate has fixed our lot?—Mind it, my
friend!

* * *

Whene'er I cling to tendrils of the Vine,
The Dervishes my way to scorn combine;
I hope some day my clay will make the key
To fit the Door to caves filled with their
wine.

* * *

Has then, indeed, a Gracious God designed
To take a senseless Clay to form a kind
Of man of it, and grant him consciousness,
Then put him on this earth—a bitter Life
to find?

I better, in the tavern worship Thee
 Than go before the Mihrab—Thee to see.
 As I was formed by Thy creative Hand,
 Thy right is: either burn or cherish me.

* * *

I made a solemn vow to fast and pray
 To gain Salvation, and be free and gay.
 But my Ablutions and my Fasts were quashed
 By drinking Wine from rosy lips that day.

* * *

I purposed to repent of Cup and Wine,
 And tried to carry out my true design,
 But when I saw the roses bloom again
 My aim was crushed, and I straightway—
 took Wine.

* * *

If I could own the Heavens for one day,
 I would pursue a fairer Scheme, and say:
 "Ye Heavens, be so formed that those on
 earth
 May gain their heart's desire—be free and
 gay."

Oh, thou who burn'st in grief for those who
burn

In Hell, thou likewise may be burnt in turn ;
Why should'st thou cry, "Have mercy on
them, God!"—

Wilt thou teach Grace to God, that He may
learn ?

* * *

If I have strung upon my looser Faith
The golden pearls of deeds to my disgrace,
So pardon me, O God! as never I
Have said, that One was Two in prayer or
praise.

* * *

As Ramazan ran out with Fast and Groan,
And Shawwal just his Bairam's trump has
blown,

So grieve no more, be happy now ! For Old
Moon's Throne with Age and Fast is over-
thrown.

* * *

If only those abjuring Love and Wine
Are granted Paradise, and there to shine ;
And who love Wine and Belle are doomed to
Hell—

Well ! Eden soon would empty be, and pine.

Let Doctors and Philosophers still preach
 Of what they think, of good and bad! Lo!
 each
 Of them is but one link of endless chains,
 That none can slip, nor break, nor over-reach.

* * *

Fulfill my only wish, O devotee!
 Save your advice for you!—don't trouble me!
 I have the upright way; it's you who goes
 Astray. Heal first your eyes, that you may
 see.

* * *

What God has on the Tablet written first,
 He changes not; and what may be the worst,
 The luckless Soul with all her bloody tears
 Won't stir the Endless Time to quench her
 thirst.

* * *

Not for delight I drink my daily Wine,
 Nor either to transgress the Law Divine.
 I do it—to be free from Self a while--
 This is my only aim, my sole design.

Then to the rolling sky itself I cried,
Asking what means had Destiny to guide
Her little children, stumbling in the dark?
“Naught but a blind belief!” the Heaven
replied.

* * *

O God! Have mercy on my wounded heart!
Forgive, when I not always do my part!
Forgive, when to the tavern turns my foot,
And, when to drink my Cup of Wine I start.

* * *

I am just so as Thou hast moulded me
Of base and precious clay—a Being—free.
How can I mend my erring ways, my God?
As was Thy plan—so must Thy creature be.

* * *

When God once kneaded all this clay of mine;
Some naught flowed into me with much
Divine,
Thus,—better than I am—I cannot be,
Since He Himself has shaped this frame of
mine.

The Temples, Kaabas, chiming bells are
 naught
 But hymns of praise to the Omniscient God ;
 Whilst Pulpits, Crosses, Beads but symbols
 are
 Of homage to the same Sublimest Thot.

* * *

The dewdrop cried : "How far I'm from the
 sea !"
 The ocean laughed : "What simpleton thou be !
 We are all one ; in common we are gods ;
 A *dot alone* divideth thee from me."

* * *

To re-create dead lips the Magi claim.
 They lie—they are deceivers void of shame.
 Not to the smallest insect can they give
 The Breath of life, once fled, tho great
 their fame.

* * *

The right hand holds the jug, Koran in left ;
 At times the path seems straight, at times
 bereft.
 Thus 'neath this turquoise tinted sky, I am
 Not heathen, neither Islam's conquered theft.

Out of mere joy for drink, I don't imbibe,
I ponder not on Koran, neither tribe;
Existence—illusions to forget,
That is the reason why some men imbibe.

* * *

This much, O Lord, Thou must agree with me,
That *one* I never called by *two* or *three*;
For this I know, that all our figures here
Are from Thy Own—eternal, whole, and free.

* * *

Alas! O'er Death I'd never lose a tear,
By far more rather for *this* life I'd fear.
God gave this life to me in trust, and should
He ask it back of me—I'll give with cheer.

* * *

Hypocrisy and lies the mobs enwrap—
To Allah cling; don't counteract His step.
Whatever tricks and schemes you may invent,
Won't profit you, as Fate you never can
entrap.

With Peace my heart was filled to overflow,
 As I resolved that sober I would grow;
 Sight of a bar! and—resolutions fled;
 Taste of a cup—all soberness made go.

* * *

If with my sorrow Thou hast sympathy,
 Then take the yoke of sin away from me;
 Forgive the feet that to the tavern steer,
 Forget the hand that gave the cup to me.

* * *

To live according to the rules of sense,
 Is useless effort, for it keeps us tense;
 While with His dext'rous hand the Master
 Fate
 Will teach us live at ev'ry made offence.

* * *

Redeem me, Oh my God, from selfish pride
 That good and evil claims, while with the tide
 Goes soberness; intoxicate my soul
 That both I may forget—be Thou my Guide!

Take ev'ry day your Cup of Ruby Wine,
That fills your heart with Wisdom, Bliss
Divine!

Had Iblis tasted but one drop, he would
Have bowed, and worshipped Adam for the
Wine.

* * *

For Knowledge longing, Oneness questioned
me:

"Commence to spell the Alphabet to me!"
As I began: "Alif," the Oneness cried:
"Enuf! No more! Who knows Alif, knows
Me!"

* * *

The church and mosque, the synagogue and
school

Entice men's souls to Heaven or Hell's pool;
But those divining Allah's mystery
Can never be deceived by foolish rule.

* * *

And to the mosque I went, my special way,
With rug under my arm, but—not to pray;
My mat was badly worn, and so I thot
It's time to get a better one *today*.

Here at this blest Mohammed's tomb, I own
 To Thee, Allah, my sins and crimes alone,
 If I offended Thee—be merciful;
 Forgive, Oh Lord, my faults I now bemoan.

* * *

Relying on Thy Grace, Omniscient God,
 How senselessly Thy warnings down I trod.
 Oh! Bounteous Grace! It's naught to Thee,
 whe'r good
 Or evil was by sinners done or not.

* * *

Khayyam! Why are you mourning for your
 sin?

In mourning never solace can be seen.
 Who never sinned, he never tasted sweet
 Forgiveness—as full pardon follows sin.

* * *

Seek company of only righteous men,
 Don't meddle with the fools of vapid brain.
 If righteous men give poison—you may
 drink!
 An antidote from fools, pour out—it's pain!

God planted a desire in man ; how true.
Then said : "Don't satisfy your wants." Thus
you

Became perplexed. I thot : "How can I slant
My cup with wine and spill it not ?—Can
you ?"

* * *

Strike with all might this vessel's mortal clay,
Strike brutes, and howl, I care not what you
say ;

Yea, strike with lust this piece of earthly
crust—

The spirit's flight you nevermore can stay.

* * *

Call on the prophet and then say : "All-Wise !
Khayyam sends love, and lauds Thee to the
Skies !"

He asks : "Why Scriptures give fermented
milk,

When use of Wine to mankind it denies !"

* * *

The Prophet then replied : "My love I send
To poor Khayyam, who does not understand
Koran, which to plebeians, Wine forbids,
But to the wise is still a faithful friend."

A drunken Arab severed with his sword
 A camel's leg. We know, Oh All-wise Lord!
 That for this cause the Prophet has declared
 The Wine forbidden to such cruel horde.

* * *

Man's passion equals to a snarling dog
 Which breaks our sleep and barks at ev'ry
 rogue.
 Creeps fox-like—sleeps just like a hare, then
 leaps
 With wolfish hunger at a helpless flock.

* * *

You who did ill, and left the good alone,
 But still for Grace of God look to His Throne,
 Hope not for mercy! For the good undone
 Is never done; nor evil done, undone.

* * *

My life, Oh gracious Lord! I owe to Thee,
 And my old age to none but Thee.
 Quite for a century I tried to see,
 If Thy Grace, or my sins will greater be.

Make easy my sad life ; it has its needs,
Hide from the world all sins and evil deeds ;
Make happy me today, and deal with me
Tomorrow, when for me Thy Mercy pleads.

* * *

Some have the faith, the creeds, their forms
discussed ;
While others—seeking Truth—their paths have
lost,
But from behind the veil a Voice was heard :
“Not in the realm of Here, nor There, do
trust !”

* * *

The last design of all the forms are we,
The very essence of divinity ;
The total World is an enormous ring ;
We are the gems—the ring's embroidery.

* * *

The learned men in ardent zeal and trust
Would fathom Truth Divine at any cost,
Would even fly with Burak's wings to Heav'n,
But all in vain—their brains, too, turned to
dust.

With Doctors and Philosophers I spent,
In youth, much time to hear their argument
About the Here and There, but—with much
less
The same door out I came than in I went.

* * *

And all that I have learnt and all I know,
I sowed in ev'ry place where seed would
grow;
But when the harvest came—what was my
gain?
Like water did I come, like wind I go.

* * *

I wonder, why I came into this World;
Without my own consent I here was whirled!
Come, Saki; then, fill up my Cup, to purge
My doubt; for soon to dust I shall be stirred!

* * *

I scanned the Saturn's rings, and on the road
I solved so many problems with my thot.
But when I came to solve the Human Fate,
My keenest thot was brought at once to
naught.

A door to which I failed to find the key,
Keeps locked the Secrets of Eternity.
Behind the veil they talked of thee and me—
But rent in twain that veil—ah, where are
we?

* * *

Again I compassed sea and land, to see
If I could fathom God's Divine Decree.
I scanned the Heavens, and their many signs,
Still all of it in vain—I found no key.

* * *

Then to the rolling Heav'n I lifted up
My hands and cried: "Let find it me, Oh,
Hope!
Thou art in me! Thy lamp let guide me
right,"
But words behind the veil I heard: "No
Hope!"

* * *

I saw the door, void of a lock and key,
A curtain veiled—in great perplexity.
Methinks I overhear some whisper near:
"The Mother is the door and has the key."

I put my lips to Wine-Cup's lips, and yearned
 To ascertain the length of Life—and burned
 To know the Secret. But, alas! I heard:
 "Do drink! for none, once dead, has yet
 returned."

* * *

Up There, in God's Abode, reigns Azrael,
 Who holds for ev'ry mortal of this dale
 The hidden Cup of Death. Don't shrink,
 but drink,
 When you shall see that Cup brought to your
 cell.

* * *

It is opprobrious that flesh and bone
 Should dwell a cripple on this earthly zone,
 When ev'ry soul once stripp'd of this clay-
 house
 Can fly and soar about the Heav'nly Throne.

* * *

If human heart would know Life's Secret
 here,
 By knowing Death, it would God's Secret
 hear.
 But as you nothing know, when with yourself,
 Will *then* you *know*, when passed from self—my
 dear!

"To be" or "Not to be"—for that I do not
care ;

Of "ups and downs"—I never shall despair.
For me it's best to drink my daily Wine,
And dream my life away in visions fair.

* * *

Submit thy reck'ning to the Heav'nly Fate
And Wheel! Let Heavens seven be, or eight!
Why should you fret about the Past and That
To Come! Contented be with thy Today!

* * *

Predestination, paradise, and hell,
I sought to find beyond the skies, pell-mell.
When spoke the still small voice to me: "My
friend,
In thee are kismet, paradise, and hell."

* * *

This vault of Heaven under which we move,
Is like a magic lantern, this to prove:
The Sun there—is the flame; the World—
the lamp,
And we the figures who revolving move.

We are but common puppets of the Game,
While Fate plays on life's Chess-board with-
out shame.

And we are moved—just so and so, then
Placed in a dead box is our weary frame.

* * *

The Saints and Prophets with their wit and
brain
As guiding Lights their name and fame did
gain.

Ev'n they could find no road out of this dark;
They taught mere dreams, and fell asleep
again.

* * *

We, like a pool-ball, here or there, are thrown,
Since Fate's resistless bats are cutely blown;
Why does He drive us in this maddening
sport?

He only knows—and knows it all alone.

* * *

Upon the Tablet of Creation, all
The things that be, were long since marked.

They roll,
Unheeding bliss or grief, from Morning First
To Dawn, the Last of Reck'ning on this Ball

This sky is like an overturned cup,
Whereto the Wise with awe are gazing up,
Do not ascribe your Fate to moving skies!
They are as helpless, as the helpless grub.

* * *

Be ready! Soon the Fate may end your woe;
And then your Soul the hidden Secrets know.
Drink Wine! For you don't know whence
 you did come!
Be happy! You don't know where you may go.

* * *

While Moon and Venus there above will dwell,
The Wine shall in its merit still excel.
I but suspect the Vinters, if they buy
The stuff as half so precious as they sell.

* * *

Oh! That we such a resting-place would
 gain,
In which we, pilgrims, visions might attain,
That after thousand years' rest in the earth,
Our dust might turn to Life, to bloom again;

That God should not unfold the Book of Fate,
But rather scheme—this World to re-create,
And either grant my life a fairer leaf,
Or, from Fate's Roll my name obliterate.

* * *

A drunkard, neither liberal nor clean,
Is called by fellow-drunkards *bad* and *mean*,
While other men, tho scorning him—for fear
Of Wrath, take him for Good. What's Right,
what's Sin?

* * *

I can't agree, Oh God, with Thy Decree,
As no man on this Earth from sin is free.
When I do ill, Thy Law will punish me,
What's then the difference 'tween me and
Thee?

* * *

To neither Saints nor Sages of the past,
Nor those yet forth to come at last,
Nor what is writ in books or said of them,
Has God revealed His Truth, or proved man
lost.

If I have pried into Thy mystery,
It was to fathom Thee—Eternity.
But if I did against Thy Will—let be
Thine Mercy greater than my sins to Thee.

* * *

If Life, a Secret shrouded in a veil,
Appears to us, while conscious; then we'll fail
To fathom it, when—void of senses in
The grasp of death—we nothing can unveil.

* * *

In madness and despair men search for Thee,
Wealth cannot find Thee, neither poverty.
All speak Thy Name—still none have ears
to hear,
Though Omnipresent—none has eyes to see.

* * *

Since Fortune shuns the man of sense and brain,
And fools alone good luck may claim,
Then drink, until all reason from you flees,
And Good Luck links you to its magic chain.

Invested with bought ranks—the Wealthy
hold

This Life's great joy to lie in land and gold ;
But those who stake their lives for Truth
alone

Are soon forgotten, or for nothing sold.

* * *

What's it to Thee, that I have come below ?
What profits Thee, when from this Earth I
go ?

If Thou didst know, what Life I here would lead,
Why have me come here ? Why compel me
go ?

* * *

Of all the men on earth I learned to know,
Two kinds have found felicity below ;
The *One*, who fathomed Life's Great Secret—
and
The *Other*, who no word of it did know.

* * *

God may reveal Himself to us alone
In thought, in word, in deed, undone or done.
And while no school may hear of us, we hear
Their cry : "I'm saved, I'm saved !" —Oh,
simpleton !

They say : "With endless Hope the very stone
That in the earthly bosom rests unknown,
May change at last into a Ruby red";
Of course, with its own blood alone.

* * *

No man will solve the cause of mystery,
Or ever pass a step outside his destiny.
Because of Mankind's imperfection know :
"The greatest Master shall a pupil be !"

* * *

I tried to grasp the turns of worldly Wheel,
Which doubtlessly Man's secrets well con-
ceals.

I spent my life for sev'nty years, but found
Myself perplexed, without a knowledge, still.

* * *

Why muse on secrets of Eternity,
Why torture mind with vain perplexity ?
Be happy, live in joy ! For God has not
Consulted you, to plan Man's destiny.

At first Thou mad'st me slowly know myself,
At last Thou tor'st me quickly from myself.
As from the first Thou plann'st to leave

Khayyam,

Why didst Thou fling him in this worthless
pelf?

* * *

World's mystery you'll never find or read,
Where wise men failed, you never will suc-
ceed.

Create with Wine your earthly paradise,
Leave Paradise *above* for Saints to feed.

* * *

With speedy wings to higher spheres I tried
To soar, and solve all secrets in my flight;
But finding there no guide to lead me on,
I fell to earth again with broken pride.

* * *

With Grape provide my life, and when I die,
Wash off with Grape my corpse without a
sigh,

Entombed within a vineyard I would lie
Beside a wall where roses bloom and die.

Oh, Moon of my delight, thou know'st no
wane !

The changeful Moon of Heaven shines again.
She sees and greets me oft, but soon she will
My garden see in peace—but me ? —in vain.

* * *

And when ye, friends, will come my spot to
crown—

With Ruby-Wine and Houris fair and brown,
Ye have good time—Remember me, when
comes

My turn—the Cup for me turn upside down !

* * *

What did I gain of all my labours here ?
Of all my riches ? Nothing, so I fear,
For when my torch of joy is once extinct,
I then—a broken Cup—in dust appear.

* * *

Thou, Love, and I, found but one Body—See !
It has two heads, like thee and me ;
They move around the circle from one point,
And we, at last, is that one point agree.

Khayyam! You stitched long time your tents
of art,
And now!—you find in full despair your heart.
Has Fate decreed to cut your thread of life?
If so, cling still to Hope, and act your part.

* * *

At present I shall drink my Cup of Wine,
While from my grave shall rise fragrance
divine
And ev'ry one who passes by my tomb—
Shall fall dead drunk from that perfume of
Vine.

* * *

In youth my thought these golden dreams
evolved:
“World's problems? Oh, how easy they are
solved!”
But wiser now speaks Old Age: “I see,
That all my efforts are in naught dissolved!”

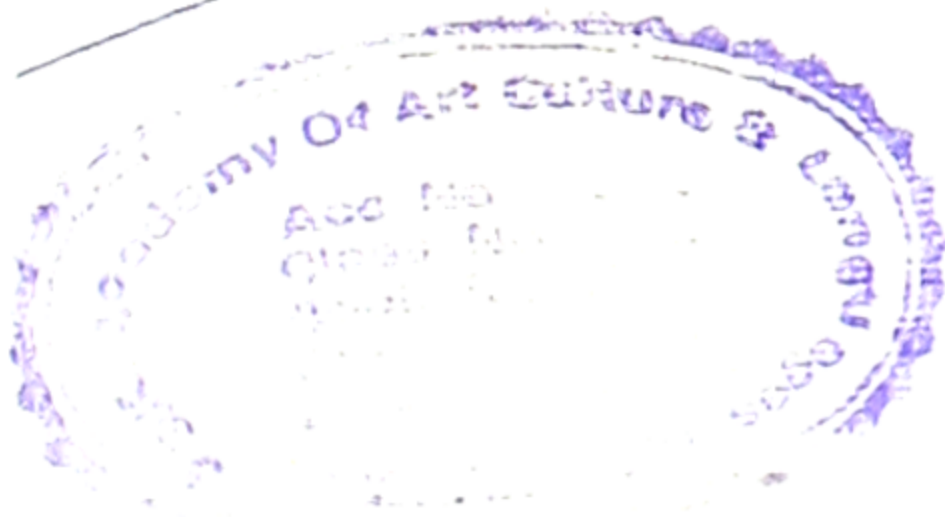
* * *

Of all the people I have ever known,
Two kinds of Happiness were to me shown—
One kind that searched for worldly mastery,
All others, fools, who would leave good alone.





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